



Bruntsfield Primary School Parent Council

MINUTES (ADDENDUM)

PARENT COUNCIL MEETING

January 30<sup>th</sup> 2018

Staff Room

DU recused himself from chairing this item on the agenda, declaring a conflict of interest. SH took up the Chair for the duration of this item. SH summarised the application, noting that it provided for 6 weeks of yoga instruction to all P1 and P2 pupils and its alignment with the curriculum and support from the school. SH also provided revised figures for the funding application, clarifying that the cost of the programme included £900 worth of equipment, and equated to £2,700 for delivery (£75/class).

A discussion ensued regards the application. After outlining her expert opinion of the application (see point 3 below), TM also recused herself from the meeting, declaring a conflict of interest.

1. **Would it replace the current curriculum?** CK responded that it was part of the two hours (ie 40min) allocated to PE, and that it might be a good precursor to gymnastics or dance, which many children were interested in taking up.
2. **What would teachers do during delivery?** CK clarified that the teachers would work in partnership with the instructor, supporting or modelling accordingly during the classes. In this regard, a parent suggested that perhaps teacher provision was more important.
3. **Was it aligned to the curriculum?** It was clarified that the proposed provision was indeed aligned to the curriculum, specifically Building Resilience. It was also clarified that the proposal was additionally tailored to the curriculum and flexible to meet the needs of the children. A parent who later recused themselves from further discussion noted that yoga built strength and co-ordination for the proposed age group. The parent also reported that teachers found that yoga helped children who had difficulties with listening and attention, and that school provision would improve that.
4. **Is yoga something the school would want to support?** CK was in agreement. Parent response was largely supportive, incl. the recused parent. One parent raised strong concerns about the dangers of yoga for some unseen disabilities, such as hypermobility. A second parent responded that for their child, who was also diagnosed with hypermobility, yoga had actually been beneficial. In this regard, several other parents suggested a qualified instructor would in any case be expected to adapt to any mobility issues and modify poses for their clients. It was agreed that parental permission would be required for children to join in, with an opt-out for those who felt it was not right for their children. Another parent also stated that if the school supported it, they were happy to be guided by it. They added that if the school were in a position where yoga provision was a funding priority where other schools were facing more basic issues, that the school was privileged and doing rather well. Two other parents, however, pointed out that the afterschool yoga club had recently been cancelled because only two children had signed up. As such, they did not feel funding the proposal was good value for money (on which more on point 6). Another parent responded that the afterschool yoga club was a different case because only parents who already felt that it was important or useful would have their kids sign up; the point of the application was that in-school provision would expose more parents and children to its benefits and have a wider potential impact. On a related note, CK noted that yoga was not on the curriculum, but that it was a specialism, and in that sense enhanced the curriculum.
5. **Scope of provision.** There was concern about the scope of the application being limited only to P1-P2,

and that Active Schools already provided this. Another parent observed that yoga provision for kids was 'strange' - there is lots available up to P3, but then it disappears until one is an adult. As such, they were not sure whether it was really useful until age 9 or 10. This utility/benefit was reiterated raised in terms of legacy (point 7).

6. **Cost of provision.** There was a vehement debate on this. Parents generally felt the proposal submitted costs which were higher than market rate. Several parents acknowledged the rate came down if the equipment costs were taken into account, but still not nearly enough. Other parents noted that putting it out to tender would show cheaper rates were available, recognising, however, that that was not necessarily a measure of the quality of provision. The recused parent felt that the proposed cost of provision was higher than most others, but that it had to be noted that the provider had previously delivered so many sessions to the school for free, that it was not fair to take advantage. This parent also felt that the application's tailor-made aspect potentially mitigated its higher rate. CK suggested that the equipment costs could be reduced by the school itself procuring the materials, with the added benefit that any relevant health and safety concerns would also then be covered by that procurement. Another parent wondered whether provision might be better via training for the PE teacher, as this extended its reach throughout the school. CK responded that the current PE teacher had accepted a position elsewhere and that the school would now need to look into getting a new one.
7. **Capacity building.** This point went hand-in-hand with the cost of provision and parents often moved back and forth between the two. Parents who had earlier noted the cancellation of the afterschool yoga club noted that the programme proposed by the application was not sustainable. One stated that they were not supportive of a long-term, multi-year programme because they did not really see its benefits. In that regard, they were supportive of a short, tester programme. SH clarified that the application was a pilot programme. The parents responded that if the 6-week provision worked and more were needed, it would not be sustainable - where would the money come from? If, however, it did not work, the cost was high for such a short time. Several other parents reinforced this point, that the cost was prohibitive and that there was a lack of legacy, and how might it be up scaled for the next two years. One parent concluded that it could not. Another suggested that we did not want to be in a position where the school was left with £900 worth of yoga mats.

It was concluded that yoga provision per se was not unsupported, but that price and legacy seemed to be the most pressing concerns. This was agreed and the application was not approved.

SH outlined several alternatives: that the proposal go out to tender, that the application go back to the drawing board, and/or that the provider reconsider their pricing. SH moved that feedback be provided to CK, and that the provider, and other interested parties, work with the school to discuss provision that may offer better value for money and wider reach.

A parent objected that it would be better to wait for five new and better applications, and that parents should be solicited for feedback about other things that needed more priority. SH responded that parents then needed to fill in funding applications, but that also the established process agreed upon was that feedback would be provided on applications that were unsuccessful, as this was. CK noted that the school had received lots of thank you letters from parents on the provision children had prior to the submission of the application.

The parent noted that as an example, the replacement of Promethean boards was something the PC could fund. CK responded that she had previously used school money to do exactly that. As another example, the parent also noted that the school did not have enough books. CK responded that teachers had an unlimited budget for books and that while they could not purchase 20 copies of a title, they simply had to list their requirements to obtain at least one.